

## Welcome letter by SIGBI President 2020-2021, Johanna Raffan MBE



Dear Member

I am very pleased to welcome you to Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Ltd. I hope that you will enjoy being a member of this wonderful organisation as much as I do.

By becoming a member of SIGBI you are joining a fantastic organisation and immediately have 6,000 members as friends in 18 countries. Together we are working to ensure that other women and girls reach their potential and are all that they can be.

SIGBI is one of five Federations and is part of a global volunteer organisation known as Soroptimist International. There are over 70,000 members who can act as a mentor to you across 115 countries.

Our project work, known as Programme Action, is linked very closely to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>. Together, our goal is to improve the lives of women and girls through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities. We need to continually demonstrate how **We Stand up for Women**.

Through the work that our members have done to raise awareness of the important issues facing women and girls today, such as domestic violence, trafficking, honour-based violence, imprisonment and female genital mutilation we have been granted Special Consultative Status at the United Nations. We are rightly very proud of this and it sets us apart from other women's organisations.

The project work that you will get involved in as a member will contribute to us maintaining our UN Status. It will provide you with an opportunity to make a real difference to our society through a variety of interesting activities, many of which I hope you will become passionate about. Whether you sign a petition, lobby locally, nationally or internationally, raise funds or volunteer in a local project you will know that you are making a difference to the lives of others.

By being a Soroptimist, you will increase your breadth of knowledge about the issues facing women and girls and be better placed to do something about it!

I do hope that you find being a Soroptimist a fulfilling, interesting and enjoyable experience as I have done. I have met women that I would not have otherwise met and been to places that I would never have gone to.

Please speak to any member who will be happy to help if you need support or contact me at [president@sigbi.org](mailto:president@sigbi.org).

*Johanna M Raffan*

Johanna Raffan MBE  
Federation President 2020-21

WE STAND  UP  
FOR **WOMEN!**  
Believe to Achieve

## **Soroptimist International (SI)**

You have become a member of an International Organisation that is in 115 countries worldwide.

The Headquarters of Soroptimist International is in Cambridge, UK.

Soroptimist International has five Federations:

Africa (SIAF), Americas (SIA), Europe (SI E), Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) and South West Pacific (SISWP)

Our Federation is SI Great Britain and Ireland, each Federation operates under the SI Constitution but has its own internal structure and, policies and procedures.

For further information about Soroptimist International, our umbrella organisation, please visit [www.soroptimistinternational.org](http://www.soroptimistinternational.org)

An organisation chart of Soroptimist International and the biographies of the current Directors of SIGBI Ltd are on the SIGBI Website - <https://sigbi.org/who-we-are/how-it-works/>

## What it means to be a club member

Congratulations for becoming part of this worldwide team of women!! By joining us, you have many different ways of participating in the work of Soroptimists.

### In your club:

- You can attend the scheduled meetings
- You can join small working parties that link to your own interests
- You can meet membership and executive officers for an informal chat if there is something in particular you would like to know more about
- You can bring friends and family to events, not just the social ones
- You can host a meeting if that suits your schedule better than going out to one

### In the Region/National Association/Network:

You become part of your Region/National Association/Network which is a cluster of clubs that are geographically close. There are usually quarterly meetings.

- You can attend the Region meetings
- You can build friendship links with women from other clubs
- You can attend the charter and social events of other clubs – and take family and friends
- You can ask for an item to be put on the region agenda in consultation with your own club
- You can be the club representative at these meetings to bring back important information

### In the Federation:

- You can attend the annual conference, study days and development days
- You can attend as a silent observer to Federation meetings
- You can attend as silent observer to the UK Programme Action Committee
- You can attend the Commission for the Status of Women in New York
- You can attend any club meeting globally as a visitor with prior arrangement

As you become part of this organisation, you may want to take on a leadership role on the executive of your own club. This is where your club will support you to further understand roles and structures and you would do this before applications to Region and then Federation Office.

So, you have joined a global organisation and the opportunities are wide ranging and certainly not all are listed here. We want you to achieve your ambitions and we commit to supporting you.

For more information you might be interested in looking at the [Annual Report](#) and the [Members' Handbook](#).

# Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Ltd

## Members' Code of Conduct

### Explanation:

A code of conduct lays out an organisation's expectations and guiding principles for appropriate behaviour. It can also provide legal and ethical guidelines for members to follow.

### Application:

The Code of Conduct applies to all members of the SIGBI organisation. That is members of SIGBI Clubs, Regions, National Associations, Network and Countries and Associate Members, as referred to in the SIGBI governing documents and specifically includes those who serve on any SIGBI governing bodies.

### The Code:

SIGBI believes that all members should respect one another and work constructively to achieve the objectives of Soroptimist International. We therefore ask that all members of the SIGBI organisation take personal responsibility for their conduct and undertake the following:

- To be a positive ambassador for SIGBI and ensure that you take no action and make no comment that might damage the reputation and interests of the organisation.
- To support the Objects of Soroptimist International and the Vision and Mission of SIGBI.
- To make an active contribution towards improving the lives of women and girls through the work of the organisation.
- To conduct all activities professionally and with integrity, and respect the rights and wellbeing of all individuals.
- To not recklessly or maliciously injure the professional or personal reputation of another member.
- To avoid conflicts of interest or loyalty wherever possible. Full and prior disclosure of any conflict, or potential conflict, must be made to those concerned.
- To understand that no form of harassment or bullying will be tolerated, and that all incidents of unfair or offensive treatment will be reported.
- To be open and honest in all our dealings with members as well as the general public.
- To be tolerant of others' views, beliefs and capabilities as well as their time and energy commitment.
- To work with others to resolve any conflicts that may arise.
- To act within the governing documents of SIGBI (which includes the Articles of Association and Byelaws of SIGBI and Club, Region/National Association/Network/Country Constitutions) and abide by the policies and procedures of SIGBI.
- To respect and understand the need for confidentiality when appropriate
- To take all reasonable steps to conform to relevant law including the health and safety of yourself and others.
- To protect the intellectual property of SIGBI such as the dynamic "S" Logo.
- To value and respect diversity as a source of innovation and skill.
- To have high personal standards by awareness of and adhering to this Code, both in the spirit and in the letter.
- To pay membership fees due to any SIGBI organisation on time.

Any actions that may serve to compromise the integrity of SIGBI will not be condoned or allowed. Any substantial breach of any part of this Code may result in procedures being implemented that may result in termination of membership.

This Code is a statement of the values that all members of the SIGBI organisation will uphold in any activities that are carried out in the name of Soroptimist International of Great Britain & Ireland (SIGBI) Ltd.

### References:

SIGBI Articles of Associate and Byelaws  
Club, Region/National Associate/Network/Country Constitutions  
[www.sigbi.org/members](http://www.sigbi.org/members)